

Mount Revelstoke National Park

British Columbia

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Below: Hoary marmot, Gray jay



Introducing a park and an idea
Canada covers half a continent, fronts on three oceans, and stretches from the extreme Arctic more than halfway to the equator.

There is a great variety of land forms in this immense country, and Canada's National Parks have been created to preserve important examples for you and for generations to come.

The National Parks Act of 1930 specifies that National Parks are "dedicated to the people... for their benefit, education and enjoyment" and must remain "unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."

Mount Revelstoke National Park, approximately 100 square miles in area, is an outstanding example of the rugged Selkirk Mountain Range, with its timbered slopes, alpine meadows and sparkling lakes. The park lies on the western flank of the Selkirks. The city of Revelstoke, B.C., is situated just outside its western entrance, at the confluence of the Columbia and Illecillewaet Rivers.

The park environment

Each National Park has its own character, its unique story as a living, outdoor museum. The Mount Revelstoke story is one of an ancient mountain terrain characterized by sharp peaks, heavily timbered slopes, and beautiful alpine meadows.

The mountains: carved by time, weather and ice

Flanked on the east by the Purcell Mountains and on the west by the Monashee Range, the Selkirk Mountains stand out in height and geologic complexity, although all three mountain ranges are very much alike. The densely forested slopes, extensive snowfields, and glaciers bear witness to the heavy precipitation in this region. In many areas the annual winter snowfall averages 30 to 40 feet.

Streams are mostly glacier-fed, short and rapid. Lakes are neither numerous nor large, and except for the summit area of Mt. Revelstoke the valleys are usually narrow.

Within the park the Selkirk's rock formations belong primarily to the Cambrian and Precambrian eras, and are approximately 500 million years old. Most of the rocks are of sedimentary origin, created from mud, sand, silt and gravel, carried by rivers into an ancient sea that once covered this part of North America. Tens of millions of years later, great forces within the earth's crust lifted, folded and sheared the layers of hardened sediments, and the mountains were born.

During the period of mountain building and more recently, masses of molten or igneous rock invaded faults and weakened zones in the sedimentary rock, causing changes in the original strata.

Erosion by running water and the scouring action of glaciers have shaped and carved the mountains into their present sculptured forms.

The British Columbia Government began construction of a road to the summit in 1911, and in 1914 Mount Revelstoke was established as a National Park. In 1927 the road to the summit was completed and officially opened by the Prince of Wales. It has recently been completely reconstructed.

How to get there

The Trans-Canada Highway passes through the southeastern section of the park for eight miles and parallels the south boundary for another 11 miles. The main line of the Canadian Pacific Railway provides the city of Revelstoke with regular passenger service, and a good landing strip for light planes is situated just south of town. Commercial service from here connects with larger airports in Kamloops and in the Okanagan region.

A park motor vehicle permit is required for all motorized vehicles and may be purchased at the park gates.

How to enjoy the park

Season — The park is open all year, but deep snow often covers the summit of Mount Revelstoke until mid-June. Cross-country skiing is popular in winter, and each year international ski jumping is featured in late winter.

Motoring — From the Trans-Canada Highway, a 16-mile road leads by easy grades to the broad summit of Mount Revelstoke. The road has several viewpoints along its length and offers some of the finest mountain scenery in Canada. The summit affords a magnificent view of the Columbia River and the glaciated peaks of the Selkirk and Monashee Ranges.

Hiking — This is one of the best ways to explore Mount Revelstoke National Park. Altogether there are over 40 miles of improved trails in the park. Some are for fire protection; others are of interest to the naturalist and hiker.

From the terminus of the road leading to the summit of Mount Revelstoke good paths lead to such sites as the "icebox", a snow-filled crevice among heaped and tumbled masses of lichen-covered rocks, and to Millar and Jade Lakes.

Mountain Climbing — Mountain climbers, and hikers travelling off park trails, must register with a park warden before and after each trip. Hikers and climbers should also purchase a topographical map of the park, available at a nominal charge at the administration building.

Fishing — Fishing in the park is by permit, available at a nominal charge at the park administration office or from any park warden.

Protect your park!

National Parks are selected areas set apart as nature sanctuaries and special care is taken to maintain them in their natural state. For this reason all wildlife, including birds, and plants, trees, and rocks, are to be left undisturbed.



Alpine meadow



Even the wildflowers are not to be picked; they must be left for others to enjoy. Feeding, touching or molesting wild animals is not permitted.

You may bring your dog or cat, but dogs must be kept on leash. No permit or vaccination certificate is needed.

Where to stay

There are no campgrounds or other types of accommodation within the park. However, the City of Revelstoke, at the park's western entrance, provides good year-round accommodation and other visitor facilities.

Overnight trail trips into the back country are allowed, provided visitors register with a park warden.

Mount Revelstoke is mainly a day-use park and contains picnic areas, parking space, and sanitary facilities.

Fires

Campfires may be lit only in fireplaces provided by the park, or in portable stoves. Barbecues may be used only in picnic areas, and all coals must be dumped into existing park fireplaces. Fire permits must be obtained from a park warden for any open fires during trail travel. Anyone who observes an unattended fire should try to extinguish it, or if it is beyond his control, report it to the nearest park employee.

The plants: a study in contrasts

Mount Revelstoke National Park exhibits an endless variety of wildflowers, trees, and shrubs, which differ in character at various altitudes. On the lower slopes and in valleys and creek bottoms, trembling aspen, black cottonwood, Rocky Mountain maple, mountain ash, and elder shade the underbrush, where devil's club, salmon berry, thimbleberry, and bracken fern grow in abundance. Forested hillsides are covered with western white pine, western red cedar, western hemlock, Engelmann spruce and Douglas fir. From between 4,000 and 5,000 feet to timberline, Engelmann spruce and alpine fir predominate. At the summit they take on the typical spire-like forms of deep-snow country. In summer, the rolling alpine meadows at the summit are carpeted with colour, as they literally burst into bloom with a continuous profusion of flowers — scarlet paint brush, blue lupine, aster, yellow arnica and white valerian.

The animals: to each its own environment

Because of the deep snow, which persists until late June on the high, open plateaus, and because of the densely timbered slopes, few large mammals inhabit the park. Deer are occasionally encountered on the lower slopes, while mountain goat may be seen periodically on the steeper bluffs at the park's western entrance.

Below: Eva Lake



The smaller mammals in the park include the hoary marmot, Columbian ground squirrel, golden-mantled ground squirrel, chipmunk, white-footed mouse, and pika, or rock rabbit.

Bird life is well represented by most of the mountain species and includes the golden eagle, wren and nuthatch. Three species of grouse — ruffed, Franklin's, and blue — are found in the coniferous and mixed-wood forests, while a close cousin, the white-tailed ptarmigan, prefers the alpine summits. Among the smaller birds are the ubiquitous junco, rosy finch, red-eyed and warbling vireo, western tanager, and an occasional Townsend's solitaire. The list wouldn't be complete without the gray or Canada jay, who always seems to be present if there is food to be had.

There is good trout fishing in Eva, Millar, and Jade Lakes.

A brief park history

Mount Revelstoke National Park owes its existence largely to the people of the city of Revelstoke. In 1906 a group of townspeople spent a week exploring what is now the park, and under their leadership, local support for a park was organized. In 1910 the municipal government built a trail to Balsam Lake. That year the Revelstoke Mountain Club constructed a small log chalet there. Later, trails were extended to Millar and Eva Lakes.

How to get the most out of your visit

To help you understand and appreciate Mount Revelstoke's natural environment, you are urged to take advantage of the park's free interpretive program, conducted by a trained park naturalist and his staff. It will provide you with an insight into how climate, land formations, plants, and animals are interrelated, and it will make your stay more rewarding.

This program includes self-guiding trails, signs, and exhibits. A schedule of interpretive events is found in the natural history program for Mount Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks, available from the park administration office in Revelstoke, information centres, entrance gateways, wardens and naturalists.

Organizations, service clubs, and schools can arrange for group programs by getting in touch with the Superintendent, Mount Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks, Revelstoke, British Columbia.

Where to get information

Detailed information may be obtained from the park administration office in Revelstoke. Staff will answer questions, provide maps, outline travel routes, and refer visitors to various areas and facilities in the park.

Park wardens and naturalists, though not primarily responsible for general information, will aid you whenever possible. They are particularly helpful in planning trips into isolated areas.

Additional information on Mount Revelstoke is available from the Superintendent, Mount Revelstoke and Glacier National Parks, Revelstoke, British Columbia. For information on other National Parks, write the Director, National and Historic Parks Branch, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, Ottawa, K1A 0H4.

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Note: This is but a reference map, designed to give you a general idea of what you will find in this park. It is not a hiking or road map.

Mount Revelstoke National Park

- Legend**
- Trans-Canada Highway
 - Secondary Road
 - Walking or Hiking Trail
 - +++ Railroad
 - Lake, River, Creek
 - Snowfield, Glacier
 - ▲ Mountain
 - Warden's Cabin
 - ✕ Picnic Area
 - Campground
 - ⊙ Viewpoint
 - ⊙ Ski Area



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